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# ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

## MAY, 1856.

### EUROPEAN PEACE.

The din of conflicting armies has ceased. The nations of Europe, exhausted and sickened by the enormity of human slaughter, devastation, bereavement, expense, and crime, have again struck hands with each other in peace and amity. Another of the repeated lessons of ages has been learned, of disappointment and remorse. Arrogant expectations, herculean exertions, ruinous sacrifices, have utterly failed of their objects, and produced to all parties only the fruits of indebtedness, demoralization, sorrow, and weakness. Such has ever been the fate of the insanity of war.

Shall this awful and costly lesson be lost on the advanced wisdom and animated benevolence of our time, as it has formerly failed to correct the ambition and malignity of past ages? May we hope that the retrospect of the miseries and crimes of the war which has now ceased, and the experience of the financial embarrassments and depravity it has left, will so appall the people and governments of Europe, that they will shrink from a renewal of war as from an unfathomed precipice; or must we fear that the international jealousies excited by it, the vast military forces yet retained, and the martial spirit it has fostered, may yet be the seeds of a regerminating hostility? In the contest of these opposing influences, it may be—under divine direction—the privilege of the organized friends of peace to turn the scale. How solemn, then, is our present responsibility, how inspiring our prospect of success, at this critical and auspicious moment, for renewed zeal and exertion in diffusing the gospel of peace! We have, as ever, the voice of Christ for our guidance; and we may now have, as never before, the ears and hearts of nations open to our pleading.

The particular objects at which we should aim, and the special measures we should propose, are first the subjects of serious inquiry. We would not go back to distressing representations of the cruelties and horrors of war, for these have been repeatedly and abundantly made; and we apprehend that the minds of intelligent and philanthropic men are sufficiently impressed with them; nor would we constantly present the privations and injuries to

the physical prosperity of nations inflicted by war; the late belligerents have sufficiently experienced them; they need no information from us on this point. We cannot indeed cease to urge our plea against war on the highest grounds—its contrariety to Christianity, and its degrading and demoralizing tendency; but whatever impressions we may make of these views, still some practical measure is requisite to give action to our converts, and to counteract the established power of war makers.

We confess our loss of confidence in all appeals to rulers or governments, as such, or to the most elevated, aristocratic classes of society: we believe in the famous aphorism of Jefferson, that those who feel power forget right. In the increasing illumination of civilized nations, political power is rapidly passing into the hands of the multitude; and to untitled people at large, therefore, our representations should be addressed. Happily, in this selection our course will be the easiest; for sovereigns and nobles are impelled to war by fear, pride, jealousy, interest, or ambition, which we cannot expect to eradicate: the people, who are always losers, rush to war only from delusion, which we may reasonably hope to dispel. For this purpose we may effectually refer to the war now closed. In its real motives, its pretenses, its conduct, and its results, it is but a fair example of most other wars; and none better could be adduced, to show the fallacy of the expectation, that the attainment of any good or the removal of any evil can be accomplished by war: its inevitable losses and miseries are unredeemed by the acquisition of any blessings.

We are aware that it will be said that the object of this war was a righteous one, and that it has been in a great measure attained: we dissent from both these propositions. The professed object of the war was to protect Turkey from destruction by the invasion of Russia, and all Europe from the supposed aggressions such an increase of Russian power would menace. Now supposing it certain that the Czar of Russia, if unchecked, would have seized the throne of Turkey and obliterated its government from the list of nations, would any private individual or family of France or England have suffered the least loss or injury from that event; or are any a whit happier or more prosperous from its dearly bought prevention. That they have been dragged by the jealousy of their governments, from their quiet homes, to sustain with their blood a corrupt and tyrannical nation, is not for a righteous object. Nor has this object, costly as it is, been attained. Turkey is not more secure than before the war commenced. Limitations of fleets and new partitions of territory, are cobwebs, which Russia, without more faithfulness than usual, can at any time break through; nor is it conceivable how a continued check can be given by the allies to such aggressions, without an occupation of part of the territory of Turkey, which is, of itself, a dismemberment of her Empire, and an infringement of her independence. Cabinets know these things very well; the people should be taught to understand them also.

We are now brought towards the solution of our question, the probability of the permanency of peace. Although this doubtless depends, in some

measure, on the cordiality in which its terms are accepted, that is, the justice of its provisions; it depends vastly more on the instructions given to the people of Europe at large, which is the appropriate work of Peace Societies. We would continue to press, as we have done, the suppression of the vicious martial spirit, as opposed to the humbling and forbearing precepts of Christ; and we would moreover teach, as we have not done, that it is not only the right, but the solemn duty of Christians, in allegiance to the paramount authority of God, to refuse obedience to a government which would lead them into the crime of national war: enlistment should be refused; conscription nullified by passive cessation to act. Away with the delusion that the soldier is not responsible for criminal acts committed at the command of his rulers; no such plea will be admitted at the bar of Heaven.

We know that military service is enforced by the military power of governments; and this brings us to a recommendation the most important in our cause. We would propose to the people, earnestly to demand of their governments, the abolition, or at least, the very great reduction of their military forces and military establishments. This can be done on merely economical grounds, in which we may have the concurrence of many patriots and influential men, who may not agree with us on the criminality of war; but we should rely chiefly on this measure for the assurance of permanent and universal peace. We have come to distrust any man, however well-disposed, in the possession of unrestrained power over others, especially military power; and we have a growing conviction that wars can never be made to cease, while the instrumentality for conducting them is at hand. Armies are not needed for internal protection; this is better secured by civil police. Abolish them over the world, and you relieve treasuries from enormous drafts, and people from intolerable taxation; you release myriads of your brethren from a worse than African slavery; you ensure the reign of perpetual peace; you break everywhere the rod of the oppressor; you cast into shade the kingdom of Satan, and effect a penitent regeneration from a vastly extended, heaven-defying crime.

We have now to remark on another prevalent delusion essential to the production of war: we mean the popular bigotry of nationality, sometimes disguised under the abused name of patriotism; a sentiment opposed to universal philanthropy, one of the greatest conservators of peace. We deride the language of the ancient Greeks and Chinese, who called the people of every other nation but their own "barbarians;" but something of the feeling indicated by this expression seems to exist in the minds of the people of Christian nations in regard to others. Not only pot-house politicians, but even grave Governors and legislators, use language which implies that they consider foreigners as different races of beings from themselves; not only inferior in civilization, but destitute of those sentiments of justice and honor which they boastingly ascribe to their own country: hence we often hear the assertion, that unless we are provided with a great military defence, we shall be invaded and trodden down by foreign powers: and this language is held by those who would consider it an insult to be told, that their own

people would be disposed to invade and subjugate another country which was seen to be defenceless. We are happy to perceive, that with the increase of commerce, travel, and literature, this prejudice is giving way: we wish its entire suppression, and rejoice in the hope that the time will come when every man shall hail as a brother man the most distant inhabitant of the globe, and regard the shooting of a foreigner in battle with as much horror as the murder of his nearest neighbor.

We now perceive that the friends of peace have a great work to perform, a vast corruption to remove; a vast delusion to dispel; a vast reform to institute; and above all, a vast power to encounter: we trust they will be wise, bold, and firm. Let us disregard the sneer that we are a handful of benevolent enthusiasts, indulging the chimera of the revolution of empires. Remembering that twelve fishermen, under Divine direction, overthrew the established heathenism of mighty Rome, we may rationally hope, through the same guidance, to achieve the same success. Self-reputed wise men tell us that "human nature must be changed before our expectations can be realized: while men and their passions are as now, the cessation of war is hopeless." Their issue is not only with us, but with that omniscient Being, who prophetically declared that nations should beat their swords into ploughshares, and learn war no more. Their allegation contradicts the angels of heaven, who announced peace on earth and good-will towards men. Armed with these predictions, fortified by the forbearing, affectionate injunctions of our Saviour, we need not shrink from the dread array of power we know to be opposed to us. We are confident in hope: our struggle may be long, our conflict severe, but victory is surely at the end. The martial kingdom of the great adversary shall pass away, but the reign of love which shall succeed it shall be unbroken through eternity.

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From the London Times, of March 20.

## ENGLAND AND AMERICA — ARBITRATION.

A poet describes and excuses the pleasure with which a spectator on shore may watch the distress of a crew whom winds and waves are driving to destruction. There is another contrast, however, not so agreeable. It is when you are yourself on the treacherous element, when every rope and spar of your ship is reflected on the unruffled surface, and your sails hang limp from the yards; but at no great distance, nearer and still nearer, sea and sky meet in one dark line, an undulation is evident in the one, the other closes round you, and in five minutes you know that every yard of loose canvass will be rent into tatters, your good ship be laid on its beam-ends, and your quivering masts will either go overboard or drag you to the bottom. It is no great exaggeration to say that this is a fair account of the English and American mind at this moment. Nothing can exceed the perfect placidity, the earnest wish to give no offence, the utter absence of envy, malice, or other ill-feeling on the part of the British public towards our Republican cousins. We are honestly and unreservedly wishing them all happiness and honor; double and treble their present population; "affluence beyond the dreams of avarice";